

ARTICLE APPEARED
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THE WASHINGTON POST
30 November 1981

British Ex-Envoy Admits Affair, Denies He Spied

LONDON, Nov. 29 (AP) — A former British diplomat said today that his love affair with an embassy maid led him into illegal links with Czechoslovak intelligence sources in Prague and London more than 20 years ago.

But the ex-envoy, 63-year-old Edward Scott, denied ever being a spy and said he approached communist agents to help his mistress escape to the West.

After the incident was disclosed by the London Sunday Times, Scott called a news conference and said of his affair with the maid, "It was a damn stupid thing to do." He last saw her in Paris 20 years ago, he said.

Scott gave up his career after interrogation about his contacts with the Czechoslovaks. He was never prosecuted.

He said he had several meetings with the agents but he "told them nothing of the slightest consequence. I had no earthly intention of doing anything damaging to my country," he said.

Neither the office of Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher nor the Foreign Office would comment on the Scott story. The Foreign Office said that Scott was head of chancellery — the No. 2 embassy man — in Prague from 1956 to 1958 and left the diplomatic service in 1961 when he was 43.

Scott's contacts with Czechoslovak intelligence breached the British Official Secrets Act, which diplomats

are sworn to observe, but Scott said today he never considered himself a spy. "My allegiance was never to a foreign power," he said.

The Scott disclosure is the latest in a string of revelations about British intelligence weaknesses, following the exposure of former royal art adviser Anthony Blunt as a recruiter of spies for the Soviet Union at Cambridge University in the 1930s. The spy ring included Guy Burgess, Donald Maclean and H.A.R. "Kim" Philby, all of whom eventually defected to Moscow.

Scott was at Cambridge, but he said that unlike members of the spy ring, he was never a communist or even a sympathizer.

Scott said that to get his mistress out of the country he approached her employers, a bureau that recruited embassy cleaning staff and which he knew was a front for Czechoslovak intelligence.

Scott said his plan was to allow the Czechoslovaks to think he might be useful in the future. After the maid was permitted to leave, their relationship cooled and then "fizzled out," he said.

Scott said he was transferred to London where he was approached by a Czechoslovak agent, but he made it clear he had no intention of meeting them again and never did.

Asked if he considered himself a spy, Scott replied: "I don't, because in my lifetime the word spy means someone whose allegiance is to a foreign power."